

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 00361 111804Z

47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-05

OMB-01 IO-11 AID-05 /091 W
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P R 111735Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3837

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0361

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SS, AG, MO, MR

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: ALGERIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM MAHBES

REF: RABAT'S 0749

1. MOROCCAN OCCUPATION MAHBES WITHOUT RESISTANCE FROM ALGERIANS IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF MORE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN SAHARA AFFAIR, BUT WE ARE NOT SURE WHAT IT MEANS. ALGERIANS TO DATE HAVE PROVEN TO BE PAPER TIGER IN FACE MOROCCAN ADVANCE AND BOUMEDIENE CANNOT REMAIN INACTIVE FOR MUCH LONGER WITHOUT LOSING CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE. HE FACED WITH TWO BASIC CHOICES: (A) ACCOMMODATION, (B) RIPOSTE. WE WOULD LIKE TO THINK FORMER WILL OCCUR, AND WOULD LIKE BE ABLE TO AGREE WITH RABAT THAT MAHBES EVACUATION PAVES WAY FOR BILATERAL TALKS. WE FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT ALGERIANS WILL BE THINKING MORE IN TERMS OF RIPOSTE.

2. IT APPEARS THAT, WHATEVER THEIR PLANS FOR
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PAGE 02 ALGIER 00361 111804Z

REVENGE, ALGERIANS HAVE DECIDED TO BE MORE PRUDENT IN WAKE

AMGHALA FIASCO. FRENCH HERE UNDERSTAND ALGERIANS AND
POLISARIO HAVE DECIDED HOLD GUELTA ZEMMOUR - BIR MOGHREIN -
AIN BIN TILI - TINDOUF LINE. MAHBES BEYOND THAT LINE AND
ITS ABANDONMENT COULD BE WELL JUSTIFIED MILITARILY. FACT
IS, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT POLITICAL SYMBOL AND ITS
ABANDONMENT IS BLOW TO REGIME PRESTIGE INTERNALLY AND
INTERNATIONALLY.PARKER

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